# Brooklyn girls’ soccer teams and Caribbean league locked out after $4m field handed to all-boys school



The controversy surrounding the recent allocation of a newly renovated athletic field in Brooklyn has stirred significant backlash. The New York City Department of Education (DOE) reportedly spent $4 million in taxpayer funds to refurbish the field, only to hand over its management to the Eagle Academy for Young Men II, a small all-boys school founded by former Chancellor David Banks. This move has prompted scrutiny, particularly over alleged violations of Title IX, the federal statute that prohibits sex discrimination in educational institutions.

Prior to the field's renovation, it was a well-used space for the girls’ varsity soccer teams from Medgar Evers College Prep, Wingate, and Prospect Heights high schools. Located in District 17, these teams took advantage of the facilities for practice and home games. However, since control was transferred to Eagle Academy, which is located two miles away in District 23, these girls have found themselves displaced and facing logistical challenges to continue their participation in sports.

Coaches have expressed deep concern regarding this abrupt transition. Ruslan Yakovlyuk, coach of the Medgar Evers girls' varsity team, recounted that the girls now have to travel considerable distances to compete, often forcing them to miss classes and return late from games. He described how the previously shared public facility turned into a private domain for an all-boys school, voicing his suspicion that political favouritism is at play in this decision, particularly given Banks's former leadership role within the Eagle Academy Foundation.

Shani Nakhid-Schuster, who leads the Wingate Lady Generals soccer team, suggested that the girls’ teams were unceremoniously sidelined. She lamented the unfairness of the situation, stating that the girls had been put at a disadvantage, which many see as a significant setback for women’s sports in the area. Despite alternative spaces being offered, such as an adjacent baseball field, they were deemed unsuitable for soccer due to safety concerns involving the layout and maintenance.

The impact of this decision extends beyond the high school teams. The Caribbean Premier League Soccer (CPLS), known for hosting tournaments that celebrate Caribbean and African nations, has also been locked out of the field. After decades of using the facility, the league's season was abruptly cancelled following Eagle Academy's refusal to grant the necessary permits for field access. This denial was justified by claims that soccer cleats could compromise the field’s integrity, though critics argue that this reason is spurious.

Kenneth Bigley, a sports coordinator with the NYC Public School Athletic League, has formally lodged a complaint regarding the situation, arguing that it typifies the type of discrimination Title IX seeks to prevent. He pointed out that transferring a facility used by both genders to a single-gender institution undermines the principles of equality that educational institutions are mandated to uphold. The DOE has stated that the field was handed over to Eagle Academy due to its proximity and existing athletic programmes, but this has raised eyebrows, as neighbouring co-ed schools boast a larger array of teams.

As this matter unfolds, investigations by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights are already under way, with the federal office confirming they are looking into potential violations. The DOE has refrained from clarifying the processes leading to both the renovation funding and the decision to grant full access to Eagle Academy, leading to further questions about governance and oversight within the department.

The situation remains fluid, with stakeholders from various communities voicing their discontent and seeking resolution. Whether this leads to a reallocation of the field or a deeper examination of Title IX enforcement within New York's public schools remains to be seen.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://nypost.com/2025/06/08/us-news/nyc-doe-gives-4m-field-to-ex-chancellor-david-banks-all-boys-school-and-girls-soccer-players-get-the-boot/), [[4]](https://www.bkreader.com/featured-news/game-over-caribbean-soccer-league-cancels-season-after-being-locked-out-of-field-9287276)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://nypost.com/2025/06/08/us-news/nyc-doe-gives-4m-field-to-ex-chancellor-david-banks-all-boys-school-and-girls-soccer-players-get-the-boot/), [[2]](https://www.bkreader.com/featured-news/game-over-caribbean-soccer-league-cancels-season-after-being-locked-out-of-field-9287276), [[5]](https://www.bkreader.com/featured-news/game-over-caribbean-soccer-league-cancels-season-after-being-locked-out-of-field-9287276)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.bkreader.com/featured-news/game-over-caribbean-soccer-league-cancels-season-after-being-locked-out-of-field-9287276), [[6]](https://www.bkreader.com/featured-news/game-over-caribbean-soccer-league-cancels-season-after-being-locked-out-of-field-9287276)

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2. <https://www.bkreader.com/featured-news/game-over-caribbean-soccer-league-cancels-season-after-being-locked-out-of-field-9287276> - The Caribbean Premier League Soccer (CPLS), which has hosted annual tournaments featuring teams representing Caribbean and African nations for 35 years, was forced to cancel all games after Eagle Academy denied it permission to use the field pending renovation. The league had been using the Old Boys and Girls High School Field in Flatbush, Brooklyn, for decades, but after Eagle Academy took over management, they were denied permits to use the field, leading to the cancellation of the season.
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